

REMARKS

A petition for a three month extension of time has today been filed as a separate paper and a copy is attached hereto. Also attached hereto are copies of two declarations under 37CFR132 by Mr. Masahiro Kurokawa.

Description corresponding to newly added claims 13-15 is found at page 8, lines 16-20 of applicants' specification.

The rejection of claims 1-6 for obviousness over Ishikawa et al is respectfully traversed on the basis of the evidence of unexpected results in the form of the declarations of Mr. Kurokawa dated May 22, 2001 (copy from parent application) and January 10, 2004 attached hereto. In particular, in his more recent declaration Mr. Kurokawa compares products formed using the preferred solvent, used in all working examples, of Ishikawa et al (70 parts toluene and 30 parts n-butanol - "Comparative Experiment 5") with the use of methanol as a solvent in accordance with the invention claimed here (Experiment 1). As Mr. Kurokawa states in his declaration, the experiments and comparative experiments were all identical except for the nature of the solvent employed. As shown by the results summarized in Table I, the use of methanol in accordance with the present invention gave results superior to those obtained using the toluene/n-butanol solvent mixture of Ishikawa et al. Superior results were seen in anti-blocking properties, surface smoothness and gloss, the optimization of which is an objective of the present invention. The superior results reported by Mr. Kurokawa for the use of methanol as the solvent must be regarded as unexpected as the reference in no way suggests that methanol would give a better

result than the toluene/n-butanol mixture in terms of the properties tested. The superior results using methanol are consistent with the teachings of applicants' specification. Note applicants' teaching at page 3, line 35 to page 4, line 5 where applicants state that methanol is preferred for providing surface smoothness and gloss. Further, at page 8, lines 8-20 applicants teach that methanol provides for better removal of volatile matter from the resin product. Again this teaching of the superiority of the use of methanol in the relevant process is borne out by the experimental results reported by Mr. Kurokawa.

It is further submitted that newly added claims 13-15. As reported in Mr. Kurokawa's most recent declaration, the use of the toluene/n-butanol solvent mixture of Ishikawa et al resulted in a product containing 95.9 wt % non-volatile matter, or 4.1 wt % volatile matter. This finding is also consistent with applicants' teaching at page 8, lines 8-20, as noted above. There is no hint anywhere in Ishikawa et al that use of methanol would lead to lower volatile content in the final product and, therefore, this finding must also be regarded as unexpected.

In conclusion, it is respectfully requested that the examiner reconsider the rejection in light of the two declarations by Mr. Kurokawa and the foregoing comments, with a view toward allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

George A. Loud
Reg. No. 25,814

Dated: February 20, 2004
LORUSSO & LOUD
3137 Mount Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22305
(703) 739-9393